

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SY-05 USSS-00 FBIE-00 /067 W

----- 010545

R 281010Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6983

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0351

EGMO. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, MA

SUBJECT: RATSIMANDRAVA'S ASSASSINATION

DEPT PASS DIA

CINCLANT AND CINCUSNAVERU FOR POLADS

SUMMARY: DESPITE VARIOUS RUMORS ON WHO "REALLY" RESPONSIBLE FOR RATSIMANDRAVA ASSASSINATION (UPPER MERINA BOURGEOISIE, RATSIRAKA, CIA), EMBASSY CONTINUES ACCEPT GOMR VERSION THAT HE KILLED BY MEMBERS OF REBEL POLICE UNIT, AND THAT SOCIALIST PARTY LINKED WITH REBELLION. END SUMMARY.

1. GOMR HAS OFFICIALLY STATED THAT CHIEF OF STATE COLONEL RATSIMANDRAVA WAS ASSASSINATED BY SEVERAL MEMBERS OF GROUPE MOBILE DE POLICE (EX-FORECES REPUBLICAINES DE SECURITE). GOMR HAS ALSO PUBLICLY LINKED SOCIALIST PARTY OF MADAGASCAR (PSM) TO REBELLION OF GROUPE MOBILE DE POLICE AND IS
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HOLDING RESAMPA AND CERTAIN OTHER PSM OFFICIALS FOR

INVESTIGATION AND PRESUMABLY TRIAL. SO FAR, HOWEVER, GOMR HAS PUBLICLY AVOIDED DRAWING SPECIFIC LINK BETWEEN SOCIALIST PARTY AND RATSIMANDRAVA'S ASSASSINATION.

2. DESPITE OFFICIAL VERSION, TANANARIVE (WHICH IS MOST RUMOR-PRONE POST I HAVEN'T EVER SERVED IN, EXCEPT FOR SAIGON) IS BUZZING WITH VARIOUS OTHER REPORTS OF WHO WAS "REALLY" BEHIND ASSASSINATION. MERINA MIND, LIKE THE VIETNAMESE, IS EXTREMELY CONVOLUTED, AND RELISHES DIGGING BENEATH THE OBVIOUS TO TRY FIND HIDDEN AND DEEP-SEATED EXPLANATION. CERTAIN FRENCH RESIDENTS, AS WELL AS ONE OR MORE OF MY DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES, ALSO QUITE INCLINED TOWARD ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THIS GAME.

3. RUMOR INCLUDE FOLLOWING:

A. RATSIMANDRAVA'S ASSASSINATION PLOTTED BY UPPER MERINA BOURGEOISIE WHO USED GROUPE MOBILE DE POLICE AGENTS AS FACADE TO EXECUTE PLOT AND SCREEN REAL PLOTTERS FROM PUBLIC. UPPER-CLASS MERINA MOTIVATED BY DESIRE PROTECT THEIR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POSITIONS AGAINST RATSIMANDRAVA'S POLICY OF POWER TO THE PEOPLE THROUGH FOKONOLONA (TRADITIONAL MALAGASY VILLAGE ORGANIZATION). THIS VERSION SPREAD INTER ALIA, BY FEB 14 ARTICLE OF RESPECTED JESUIT WEEKLY LUMIERE (WHICH STRONGLY SUPPORTS FOKONOLONA POLICY), AND EVIDENTLY CAUSED THAT EDITION'S DISTRIBUTION TO BE HELD UP FOR WEEK BY CENSORSHIP.

B. RATSIMANDRAVA'S ASSASSINATION ARRANGED BY COMMANDER RATSIRAKA WHOSE AIM WAS TO ELIMINATE PRICIPAL OBSTACLE TO HIS TAKING POLITICAL POWER. FACTS THAT RATSIRAKA CONDUCTED PARLEY WITH REBELS DURING REBELLION, AND HAS RETURNED AS PROMINENT MEMBER OF MILITARY DIRECTORY IN CONTRAST TO HIS ABSENCE FROM RATSIMANDRAVA GOVERNMENT, HELP FUEL THIS RUMOR. IGNORED ARE PUBLIC STATEMENT BY ANDRIAMAHAZO THAT RATSIRAKA WAS DESIGNATED BY DIRECTORY TO PARLEY ON ITS BEHALF WITH REBELS, AND DESIRABILITY AT TIME OF COTIER-MERINA CRISIS OF BRINGING RATSIRAKA (A COTIER) INTO DIRECTORY TO TRY HELP MAINTAIN FRONT OF NATION UNITY AGAINST COTIER REBELS.

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3. CIA WAS BEHIND ASSASSINATION JUST AS IT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALLENDE'S FALL IN CHILE. BRITISH AMBASSADOR HAS TOLD ME ABOUT HEARING THIS RUMOR. PRO-SOVIET AKFM PRESS OF COURSE DOING WHAT IT CAN TO FAN THIS ONE.

4. EMBASSY CONTINUES ACCEPT GOMR VERSION AS AVAILABLE EVIDENCE SUPPORTS IT.

MENDENHALL

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